



# Town of Berwyn Heights

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**MAYOR**  
Stephen D. Isler  
**COUNCIL MEMBERS**  
Jason W. Papanikolas (Mayor Pro Tem)  
Amanda M. Dewey  
Jeffrey Jay Osmond  
Ethan D. Sweep

## Worksession Minutes June 3, 2019, 7:00 p.m.

Present were Mayor Stephen Isler, Mayor Pro Tempore (MPT) Jason Papanikolas, Councilmembers (CMs) Ethan Sweep and Jeffrey Jay Osmond. CM Amanda Dewey had an excused absence. Also present were Town Manager (TM) Maria Broadbent, Clerk Kerstin Harper and citizens.

### 1. Announcements

The Town again qualified as a Banner City this year, an award by the Maryland Municipal League (MML) recognizing active participation in League activities and showcasing municipal government. Schools will be out shortly, and everyone is requested to pay extra attention to kids playing outside.

### 2. Agenda

A Parkdale High School grant request for a senior activity was added to the agenda.

### 3. Budget Items

TM Broadbent said the budget amendments to be adopted at the June Town meeting were discussed at a previous worksession. She has nothing to add.

### 4. Discussion Items

**Beltway widening letter of opposition:** CM Sweep provided an updated letter opposing the proposed widening of the capital Beltway for discussion. The letter adds details explaining the reasons for the Council's opposition to the widening and reiterates the most common objections voiced at public hearings on the matter. The Council agreed to send the current draft of the letter tonight, so that it reaches the Maryland Board of Public Works before it votes on the project tomorrow. This will ensure the letter becomes part of the record and will give the Town standing to comment on the project in the future. A more formal letter signed by all Councilmembers will be sent later.

**Town organizations policy:** Mayor Isler said that CM Dewey drafted a Town organizations policy the Council discussed at the previous worksession. An updated version that includes the Council's changes was provided for tonight's discussion. TM Broadbent also provided an updated resolution to adopt the policy that clarifies which organizations are committees as well as the requirements pertaining to them.

Phil Ventura, 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue, said that the Seniors are unsure whether their Club would be audited under the new policy. They believe there is no need to be audited because the Club receives no money from the Town. Mayor Isler said the Town is checking with the auditor about that requirement and will inform the Seniors and other organizations once it hears back. No further changes were made to the policy.

**Resolution 12-2019 creating position of Treasurer/ Employee Benefits Manager and Assistant to the Town Manager:** TM Broadbent said the Resolution formally creates a position of Treasurer/ Employee

Benefits Manager and a position of Assistant to the Town Manager. The Council discussed the changes during the budget process and approved funding to implement them. The Treasurer will shed the human resource function excepting employee benefits administration and add asset management responsibilities. The Assistant to the Town Manager will take on the human resources function, including hiring, promotions and discipline, and employee policies. The position will add responsibilities for tracking projects, new initiatives and requests for service as well as administrative policy analysis. The old positions will remain on the roster but will not be funded. It was agreed to place the Resolution on the Town meeting agenda for adoption.

**Backpack project:** Mayor Isler explained the reasons for proposing a backpack project. As a schoolteacher, he sees many students coming back to school without proper supplies, including backpacks, writing utensils, copybooks and various types of paper. As part of the project, residents would be requested to donate backpacks filled with supplies from a wish list. He has headed up backpack projects for his school before, and the donated, supplies-filled backpacks have greatly benefitted students as well as teachers. Some of the items are basic classroom necessities, such as hand soap, tissues, and copy paper that schools often run out of.

In response to questions, Mayor Isler said that PGCPS does not always resupply classrooms in a timely manner. People, who want to donate, can donate a portion of the listed supplies rather than an entire backpack filled with them. Top necessities include pencils, composition books, lined paper, glue sticks and hand soap. Teachers can always use copy paper. The Council agreed to support the project and discussed different strategies for collecting the supplies. The project will be advertised in the next Bulletin and the Town office will provide a collection station.

**Parkdale High School grant request:** Mayor Isler said the Council received a request for assistance from Parkdale High School with a Fun & Fitness Day, which is similar to a field day, for rising seniors. The amount requested is between \$2,000 and \$2,500. A more accurate request will be coming forthwith. The Mayor & Council's FY 2019 education budget has \$4,500 to fund this type of grant request. Some of this year's funds have already been used for career day at Berwyn Heights Elementary School. Mayor Isler asked if the Council would approve the grant.

In discussion, the following points were made: the backpack project might have been funded in this manner; the Town of Berwyn Heights has given grants to Parkdale in previous years; the request came from the Parkdale PTA, which must account for how its moneys are spent in an annual audit; the Town can require a report on the use of the grant funds. In a straw poll, all Councilmembers expressed support for the grant. CM Osmond requested information on whether other cities with students at Parkdale High School receive such grant requests.

## **5. Minutes:**

Approval of the April 15 worksession was postponed.

## **6. Department Reports**

Mayor Isler reported that the Police are actively patrolling the Town and Clerk Muralles is working on the outreach program to the Latino community. Some complaints have been received about loud music played at night as more residents are having cookouts and parties outside.

CM Sweep wished all a happy gay pride month. The Public Works Department advises homeowners to remove dead trees as they pose a safety hazard. A number of complaints about mosquitos have been received. Mosquitos have been more numerous than usual as it has been a wet spring. Residents can protect themselves with mosquito repellents and by ridding their property of all standing water. If using a mosquito spraying service, residents are encouraged to hire only licensed technicians.

CM Osmond asked TM Broadbent how Code is managing with 2 vacant positions. TM Broadbent said that Code has populated the Comcate code tracking system with all relevant data and for the first time sent out business licenses using it. New violation notices and letters have been drafted, which will also be uploaded to the system and facilitate code enforcement.

Further, TM Broadbent noted that she has obtained the City of Newport's budget, which has won awards from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). and will make it available in her office. Council can peruse it at their leisure. She plans to submit the next Town budget for the award. As part of preparing for it she needs to get a compilation of the Council's goals, which will become the basis of performance measures by which that budget will be evaluated.

Mr. Ventura reported that wires are down at the intersection of Ruatan Street and 60<sup>th</sup> Avenue and that a driveway expansion is underway at 5805 Seminole Street. He wondered if the Town knew about the work and/ or has approved a variance for that address. Mayor Isler said the Town will look into it.

## **6. Town Council Schedule**

The Council reviewed the calendar. The Four Cities meeting on July 24 was added to the calendar. The impending renovation of McDonald's restaurant and Town permits and requirements were briefly discussed.

## **7. Citizens Discussion**

Phil Ventura, 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue, once more raised the issue of cars parking on the Berwyn Road bridge when Lake Artemesia Park has a lot of visitors, making it difficult for larger vehicles to get through the area, including emergency vehicles. In his opinion, the 'watch for pedestrians in crosswalk' sign makes the problem worse.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Signed: *Kerstin Harper*, Town Clerk